



SILVER TREE STEINER SCHOOL

Communications Policy

2025

This policy applies to: Staff and Parents

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Background

Silver Tree Steiner School acknowledges the importance of effective communication in fostering strong partnerships between the school and home, as well as in promoting active parental involvement. We are committed to ensuring that communication is respectful, open, and timely, which is essential for cultivating a community where students, parents/guardians, and staff feel valued, connected, and well-informed. The School encourages all members of the community to engage in communication that is courteous and respectful, and to seek clarification when needed to fully understand different perspectives. All communication will adhere to principles of privacy and confidentiality. Where necessary, records of communication will be maintained by the School in accordance with the *Records Management Policy*.

Rationale

At Silver Tree Steiner School, our aim is to be pro-active in strengthening positive partnerships between the school, its families and the wider community. Effective two-way communication is integral to this partnership.

The School communicates to parents in the following ways:

- Early Childhood Handbook
- Primary School Handbook
- School newsletter
- E-mail communication to parents
- Parent-teacher evenings
- Class Carer communication
- School reports
- School website
- Policies and procedures
- Parent-teacher appointments
- Class communication books
- Emergency text-messaging service
- Schoolzine app
- Parent education workshops
- Phone calls
- School notice board
- Weekly assemblies
- Silver Tree Steiner School Social Media Pages and Groups

Methods of Communication

Primary School Handbook and Early Childhood Handbook

These documents are provided to new families at the time of enrolment. A current version of the Primary School Handbook is available upon request from the School Office.

School Newsletter

The School Newsletter, Silver Leaves, is published every even week during term time and distributed to families via email. Hard copies are also available at Reception.

The School Newsletter will contain, in each edition, news from the Head of School, diary dates and an article from Early Childhood and select Teachers. Communication from the P&F will also be published in the newsletter.

Parent-Teacher Evenings

These are generally held once a term and are a source of valuable information. They are a vital link between the class teacher and parents, where relevant information about the coming term and year is shared. As such, it is expected that at least one parent attends each Parent-Teacher Evening.

Attending Parent-Teacher Evening contributes to your PPS hours. Please let your Class Teacher know if you are unable to attend.

Parent-Teacher Appointments

Teachers are available by appointment if parents would like to discuss their child. Appointments can be booked via Reception or via email with the Teacher.

Class Carer Communication

If the Class Teacher has elected to have a Class Carer, information from the P&F and messages regarding your class may be sent through the Class Carer. Communication from your teacher may be sent through the Class Carer, directly from the teacher, or via Reception.

School Reports

School reports are issued from Kindy 6 to Class 6 twice a year at the end of Term 2 and Term 4.

The School Website

General parent information, including policies and forms, can be found on the school website.

E-mails from Reception

Important information from the school which is deemed appropriate to deliver outside of the newsletter is sent via e-mail from Reception.

Policies and Procedures

These are available on the school's website or upon request from Reception.

Text Messaging Service

Emergency information is sent via text message e.g. in the event of a fire evacuation or school shut down. A text messaging service may be used to inform you of timely information such as camp/excursion arrival

times. It is vital that you keep your details up-to-date at the school.

Class Communication Books

The time before class is set aside for the teacher to prepare for the day. Class communication books are held at the discretion of the Teacher, usually located on the class verandah and are used to leave short messages on the day, for the teacher regarding your child.

The Schoolzine App

The Schoolzine App provides a platform for parents to access the following:

- School Calendar of Events
- Newsletters
- Absentee Notification
- Kindy Care Booking Forms
- PPS Completed Hours Form
- P & F Documents

The Schoolzine app can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Play. Search “Schoolzine”, download the app, then sign up to “Silver Tree Steiner School.”

Social Media Sites

The *Silver Tree Steiner School* Instagram Account, *Friends of the Silver Tree Steiner School* Facebook group and *Silver Tree Steiner School* Facebook page are used to re-iterate communication which is sent through the above channels.

Parents can also communicate via the ‘*Silver Tree Steiner School Businesses and Buy Swap Sell*’ group, ‘*Silver Threads – Silver Tree Steiner School Craft Group*’ and individual Class Groups, Kindy, Parent and Baby Group as per each group’s description. Please refer to our *Social Media Policy* for more information.

Direct Communication

Parents are able to e-mail their teacher directly at name.surname@silvertree.wa.edu.au, providing the content of the e-mail is respectful and it is understood that teachers are not available for immediate response via e-mail communication, nor communication over the weekend.

Teachers will contact a child’s parent as soon as possible (by phone, email or to make an appointment to meet in person) to discuss concerns that arise about their child.

The school administration staff will contact parents if a child is involved in an incident, accident or is seriously injured at school. The school will not contact parents if the child is able to be treated and is well enough to stay at school.

Parents need to keep their child’s teacher informed about any significant incidents and changes that are likely to affect the student at school, their attendance at school or their completion of homework. This can be via school administration by email, telephone or in person at a parent-teacher appointment.

Respect that the time before class is set aside for the teacher to prepare for the day and that they may have another appointment to attend after class. To enable the teacher to dedicate their attention to your communication about your child, please make an appointment. Please refer to the *Code of Conduct for Parents*.

Raising Concerns

At times parents may have concerns regarding their child's academic progress, social relationships or a general classroom matter. These concerns should be raised directly with the child's class teacher in the first instance. Appointments can be booked via Reception or a request emailed directly to the teacher. If an issue is not resolved with the teacher, it is suggested to contact the Head of School or Education Coordinator or the *Concerns and Complaints Policy* should be followed.

Staff and parents/guardians should also refer to the relevant Codes of Conduct as they set out general expectations of the standards of behaviour required by all members of Silver Tree Steiner School community. The School owes a duty to its staff to protect them from intimidating or bullying behaviour whether in verbal or written form. Staff members are instructed to terminate such contact forthwith and to advise the Head of School.

Listening Circle

For more general, whole school concerns, the Listening Circle is held every Tuesday during term from 8:30am-9am in the School Gazebo with either the Head of School or Education Coordinator. This is an informal time set aside for parents to raise any concerns, questions or feedback in a respectful and non-confrontational manner with members of the Leadership Team.

Appendix A - Guidelines for Email Communication with School Staff

Guidelines for Email Communication with School Staff

Introduction

At Silver Tree Steiner School, we value meaningful and respectful communication between families and staff as an essential part of supporting our students' wellbeing and learning journey.

Email can be a convenient way to share information, organise meetings, or follow up on simple matters. However, for more sensitive, complex, or emotional concerns, face-to-face or phone conversations are far more appropriate and effective. These forms of communication allow for care, clarity, and mutual understanding that can sometimes be lost in writing. If you're unsure whether to email or arrange a meeting, we encourage you to choose the more personal option.

The guidelines below are designed to support clear, respectful and constructive communication between home and school, and apply to all members of the school community.

The school reserves the right to filter or block emails that are not related to school business or the school's educational mission.

When to Use Email

Parents and guardians are welcome to email staff for the following reasons, ensuring they are school-related or student-related matters, such as:

- Requesting a meeting or phone call.
- Sharing general, non-urgent information.
- Following up on a matter that has already been discussed.
- Asking simple or factual questions.

Email is not suitable for:

- Urgent matters (e.g. change of pick-up arrangements). Phone Reception (9295 4787) instead.
- In-depth concerns about your child's academic progress, behaviour, or wellbeing. These are best discussed in person or by phone call.
- Sensitive or emotionally charged topics.

If you are unsure whether to email or speak in person, we recommend emailing to request a suitable time to talk.

Tone and Approach

We ask that emails reflect the same mutual care, respect, and professionalism we value in face-to-face conversations. Please keep the following in mind:

- Begin with a polite greeting and, where appropriate, a positive or appreciative note.
- Write with a calm, respectful and constructive tone.
- Avoid emailing when feeling emotional, frustrated or upset.
- Keep messages concise and focused on the key issue.
- Avoid sarcasm, humour ambiguous language, or the use of ALL CAPS - tone or intent can be easily misinterpreted in written communication.
- Use correct grammar and formatting
- Re-read your message before sending to ensure clarity and tone.

Response Times

Teachers spend most of their day directly supporting students and may not be able to check emails during school hours.

- Please allow up to 3 working days for a response; part-time staff may take longer.
- Staff are not expected to reply after hours, on weekends, or during school holidays.
- If your concern is urgent, please phone Reception rather than email (9295 4787).

Privacy and Confidentiality

- Please do not include or request personal information about other students, families or staff members in your emails.
- Emails should not be forwarded or shared without the original sender's permission.
- School email accounts are managed in accordance with privacy laws and school policies and may be subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.

Other Considerations

- Ensure that Reception has your most up-to-date contact information, including your current email address.
- Absence notifications should be submitted via the Schoolzine App, 'SZapp', or emailed directly to Reception: welcome@silvertree.wa.edu.au
- If agreed between you and your child's teacher, email may be used instead of a communication book.

These guidelines aim to support respectful and effective communication between home and school. Thank you for partnering with us to foster a positive and supportive learning environment.